



News Release

Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency

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100-Year Starship Study Strategic Planning Workshop Held

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) and the NASA Ames Research Center announced their [100-Year Starship Study](#) in October. This study is examining the business model needed to develop and mature technologies that would enable long-distance manned space flight a century from now. Anticipated to last one year, the study kicked off in January with a Strategic Planning Workshop.

“For generations, people have been excited and inspired by exploration,” said Dave Neyland, Director of DARPA’s Tactical Technology Office. “This study hopes to inspire research of interstellar space travel, something with a very long time horizon. Through it, we hope to excite and encourage a younger generation that was not yet born when man first walked on the moon.”

The workshop brought together 29 visionaries with diverse backgrounds from aerospace engineer to science fiction author. Their mission was to steer efforts to develop a business model, establish a charter and develop the organizational construct needed to affect this long-term strategy. Over the course of two days, members met and discussed the requirements for seeding research that would enable interstellar flight.

“We picked the 100-Year Starship name because it would require a long-range sustainable effort to get our species to other stars,” said Neyland. “Looking at history, most significant exploration, like crossing oceans or continents for the first time, was sponsored by patrons or groups outside of government. We’re here because we’d like to start with a mechanism that gets this long-range project out of the government, and make sure it is an energized and self-sustaining enterprise.”

Workshop members addressed a wide range of issues, such as why humans should visit the stars, the risks involved, the economic and socio-political-religious obstacles, and the type of governance structure needed. Other topics, such as the importance of having short-term achievable goals, identifying a destination for a 100-Year Starship, bringing together a core group of experts/enthusiasts, interest groups and private funding, and the continued importance of science and technical education for the youth of the world were also discussed at length.

The workshop concluded with unanimous acknowledgement that there exist many unanswered questions and a great deal of work ahead. Planning is underway for follow on activities, with the study scheduled for completion by the end of 2011.

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